



Urban design

The Level Crossing Removal Project: Caulfield to Dandenong is removing nine level crossings and rebuilding five stations on the Cranbourne Pakenham rail line. The project will reduce congestion on the local road and rail network, and deliver a safer and more reliable train service, contributing to a 42 per cent increase in capacity.

The proposed urban design for the Caulfield to Dandenong section of the train line has been developed by a team of urban designers, engineers and technical specialists. The design removes the level crossings while creating over 225,000 square metres of open space and parklands, including new community activity spaces.

The design integrates the project's transport objectives with significant opportunities for urban renewal and new community spaces. It will create attractive, safe and well-maintained places that work better for the people who live and work nearby.

The elevated rail design will improve connections between shopping areas, parks, transport hubs, health services, recreation and community facilities by transforming the rail corridor into open space.

Why apply urban design principles?

The aim of the principles is to create high-quality, safe and well-maintained public spaces. Through applying the principles, the design will:

- provide easier connections for pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and road users
- improve safety by removing the interface between road and rail
- revitalise local areas and encourage community gatherings
- increase residential and commercial development opportunities, including cafés, restaurants, shops and community areas.



Image Clayton Road, Clayton community space (illustration only)



Image Noble Park station precinct (illustration only)

What say does the community have in the urban design?

Community consultation is shaping the design of the areas where the level crossings will be removed and also into the community spaces. The design ideas that have been developed so far have responded to input from the community.

In 2015, over 1500 comments were received from local community members at meetings and 'pop-ups' at stations, shopping centres and markets. This data was provided to the design team, who refined the proposed design based on the feedback and suggestions from the community. These included requests for more open space, better connections and more community facilities.

The consultation process is continuing in early 2016, with community information sessions to learn more about what people want to protect in their local area and what they think could be improved. This input will influence and inform the final urban design.

What are the urban design features of elevated rail lines?

An elevated rail structure lifts the train line above the ground, creating open space underneath and connecting land previously separated by the tracks.

The three elevated sections of the rail line from Caulfield to Dandenong may be used for plazas, parks, bus interchange, community facilities, car parking, playgrounds and a shared cycling and pedestrian path.

Cyclists and pedestrians will be able to freely cross the rail corridor without having to detour to the nearest level crossing. Residents can walk safely from their homes along the off-road path underneath the rail line to the local shopping centre or station or community facilities.

The design of the elevated rail line allows more natural light and airflow underneath. Rainwater can reach the ground to sustain the vegetation below.

Mature trees can be planted closer to an elevated rail structure than to a rail line built in a cutting. The taller trees will provide visual screening of the structure. Once established, the vegetation planted under and alongside the rail line will create an urban forest and habitat for local fauna.

The design will create a high-quality, safe and well-maintained landscape that connects people to revitalised local places.

How will urban design principles ensure better outcomes?

Urban design not only considers buildings and public spaces, but also the way the community uses and moves around the rail corridor on foot, by car or bicycle, or on public transport.

The project team has worked with the Office of the Victorian Government Architect and the Glen Eira, Monash, Kingston and Greater Dandenong councils to develop urban design principles for the project. These are:

- identity
- connectivity and wayfinding
- urban integration
- resilience and sustainability
- amenity
- vibrancy
- safety
- accessibility.

These principles, and what they mean to the local community, are guiding the design process. The proposed design has been developed and assessed using the design principles and to meet the requirements of the Victorian Transport Integration Act.

What happens next?

The Victorian Government has released the proposed design for the project. Consultation has commenced on the proposed design and will conclude in early 2016.

Feedback from the community will be used to enhance the design and inform decision-making by government. Outcomes from the consultation will be shared with the community and the contractors who are delivering the project.

The Level Crossing Removal Authority will continue to incorporate feedback from the community to refine the proposed design.

Contact us

✉ levelcrossings.vic.gov.au
✉ contact@levelcrossings.vic.gov.au

☎ 1800 762 667 (business hours
Monday – Friday and during
out of hours works)

✉ Level Crossing Removal Authority,
GPO Box 4509
Melbourne VIC 3001



Translation service
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than English, please
call 9280 0780